



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 19, 2004**

**DONALD JAMES HELMS Jr., CAROLYN SAUNDERS HELMS,  
KATHERINE CARDINAL AND JOHNNY NEIL SMITH FACE CHARGES  
OF CONSPIRACY AND STRUCTURING POSTAL MONEY ORDERS  
TO AVOID CURRENCY REPORTING REQUIREMENT**

United States Attorney David M. Nissman announced today that a federal Grand Jury returned an eleven (11) count Indictment charging DONALD JAMES HELMS Jr., CAROLYN SAUNDERS HELMS, KATHERINE CARDINAL and JOHNNY NEIL SMITH with conspiracy and structuring monetary transactions, as part of a pattern of illegal activity involving more than \$100,000 in a 12-month period, for the purpose of avoiding a currency reporting requirement. The currency reporting requirement is triggered by a transaction or group of contemporaneous transactions, which involves United States currency in amounts of \$3000 or more. Count Eleven of the Indictment is a forfeiture allegation in which the United States seeks to forfeit \$6,843,028.53 in U.S. currency.

The charged offenses arose out of an investigation conducted by the United States Postal Inspection Service and other federal agencies. The investigation revealed that from not later than January 18, 2000, through January 27, 2003, postal money orders totaling approximately \$7,000,000 were purchased at various post offices throughout the Virgin Islands, in amounts under \$3,000, by members of the conspiracy, acting alone and together, on behalf of Donald James Helms Jr. and/or West Indies Phone Cards (WIPC),

solely for the purposing of avoiding the reporting requirement.

Donald Helms, age 50, and Carolyn Saunders Helms, age 37, are residents of the State of Florida. Johnny Neil Smith, age 36 and Katherine Cardinal, age 38, are residents of St. Thomas.

The maximum penalty for the conspiracy offense is 5 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. The maximum penalty for the structuring offense is 10 years imprisonment and a \$500,000 fine for each count of conviction.

The Defendants were arraigned on May 19, 2004 and were released on bail.

The Indictment is a charging document and the defendants are presumed innocent unless and until convicted in a court of law.

U. S. Attorney Nissman commended the work of the United States Postal Inspection Service, the Internal Revenue Service and the Drug Enforcement Administration, who investigated this case.